

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 01144 291458Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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/081 W

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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9248
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1144

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, XF, IS, US, JO
SUBJ: A WEST BANK THIRD FORCE?

REF: JERUSALEM 1137

1. IN REFTTEL, WE REPORTED IDEA OF HEBRON'S
NATIONALIST MAYOR QAWASIMA THAT IN EVENT BEGIN
CONTINUES TO VETO PLO PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA
CONFERENCE, PLO COULD DEPUTIZE CERTAIN WEST
BANK MAYORS TO REPRESENT PALESTINIANS. THIS
IS A CHANGE FROM THE STANDARD WEST BANK REFRAIN
"THE PLO AND ONLY THE PLO REPRESENTES US."
QAWASIMA SHOWED SURPRISING PROCEDURAL FLEXIBILITY
BUT WAS NOT RPT NOT PREPARED TO GO TO GENEVA
AS PART OF A JORDANIAN DELEGATION.

2. ALSO INTERESTING IS THE CURRENT EFFORT OF
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PAGE 02 JERUSA 01144 291458Z

WEST BANK MAYORS TO DRAFT A POLICY DECLARATION
FOR TRANSMITTAL TO THE SECRETARY ON HIS ARRIVAL
HERE. PRESENT DRAFT, WHILE REHEARSING LITANY
ABOUT PLO AS THE RECOGNIZED REPRESENTATIVE
OF ALL PALESTINIANS, CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL TO
PRE-JUNE 5, 1967 BORDERS AND IMPLICITLY RECOGNIZES
ISRAEL (SOMETHING WHICH WEST BANKERS IN PRIVATE

CONVERSATION SAY THEY HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN DOING).

3. FINALLY, RESPECTED NABLUS PROFESSIONAL PERSONALITY RECENTLY TOLD CONGEN THAT WEST BANK LEADERS WERE PREPARED TO ASSERT THEMSELVES "WHEN TIME COMES." HE ALSO STATED THAT TIME WAS NOT YET RIPE.

4. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ABOVE TRENDS INTERESTING AND POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT, WE CAUTION AGAINST READING TOO MUCH INTO THEM. WEST BANKERS VERY MUCH WANT LEGITIMACY WHICH WOULD BE CONFERRED BY HAVING A STATE OF THEIR OWN PRIOR TO ESTABLISHMENT OF LINKS WITH JORDAN AND PERHPAS OTHER ARAB STATES. WEST BANK LEADERS FIND THEMSELVES IN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT SITUATION: LIKUD GOVERNMENT SAYS GOI WILL NOT WITHDRAW AND INSISTS JEWS MAY SETTLE ANYWHERE ON WEST BANK; PLO UNABLE TO ACCEPT 242 AND 338 WHICH IS TICKET TO GENEVA; US, SADAT AND HUSSEIN ARE OPPOSED TO INDEPENDENT PALESTINE AND FAVOR FEDERATION WITH JORDAN. IN THIS CONTEXT, HUSSEIN'S CALL FOR REFERENDUM IS SUSPECT. WEST BANKERS FEAR HUSSEIN HAS IN MIND ASKING ONLY ONE QUESTION" "WHOM DO YOU PREFER, BEGIN OR ME?" OUR READING IS THAT AUTHENTIC NATIONALIST LEADERS (E.G. SHAKA', QAWASIMA) WOULD GO TO
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PAGE 03 JERUSA 01144 291458Z

GENEVA ONLY IF PLO WERE TO GIVE OVERT OR TACIT AGREEMENT, A POSSIBILITY THAT SEEMS REMOTE. OTHERWISE, WEST BANKERS WOULD APPEAR TO BE UNDER OVERWHELMING INFLUENCE OF JORDAN, ISRAEL, US OR OTHERS RATHER THAN BEING FREE TO REPRESENT WISHES OF WEST BANKERS THEMSELVES.
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